

**KENTUCKY BOARD OF EDUCATION  
BOARD RETREAT  
May 12-13, 2004**

**BERRY HILL MANSION  
FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY**

***SUMMARY MINUTES***

The Kentucky Board of Education held its retreat meeting on May 12-13, 2004, at Berry Hill Mansion in Frankfort, Kentucky. The Board held the following discussions:

**Wednesday, May 12, 2004**

***CALL TO ORDER***

Chair Helen Mountjoy called the retreat to order at 9:05 a.m.

***SWEARING-IN OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS***

Judge Reed Rhorer conducted the swearing-in ceremony for Bonnie Lash Freeman, David Bruce Rhodes, Janna P. Vice and David L. Webb.

***ROLL CALL***

Present for the meeting were Janice Allen, Dorie Combs, Bonnie Lash Freeman, Jeff Mando, Helen Mountjoy, Hilma Prather, David Rhodes, David Tachau, Keith Travis, Janna Vice and David Webb. Thomas Layzell was absent.

***PRESENTATION ON ROLE OF STATE BOARD MEMBERS***

Chair Mountjoy introduced Brenda Welburn, Executive Director of the National Association of State Boards of Education. Mountjoy indicated that Ms. Welburn was present to guide the Board through a discussion of the role of state boards of education and help identify any challenges and opportunities that the Board may face in the upcoming months.

Ms. Welburn identified the agenda for her presentation as the following:

- Welcome and Introductions
- Why Board Members Serve
- The Role of the State Board of Education
- Practices of Effective State Boards of Education
- The Sequence of Policy Development
- Challenges and Opportunities for the Kentucky Board of Education

Ms. Welburn spent time expanding on each of the topics listed above. When she reached the challenges and opportunities for the Kentucky Board of Education section, the following issues were identified:

- Succession planning and leadership
- Time for complex issues
- Political transitions
- Board authority

Additionally, the following education issues were identified as ones that need to be kept on the Board's agenda in the upcoming months:

- Assessment and accountability
- Education morale – Department and field
- *No Child Left Behind*
- High school reform
- Moving instruction to a higher level
- Education budget
- Lack of diversity among superintendents
- School health issues

### ***DISCUSSION OF ISSUES FOR THE COMING YEAR***

The next portion of the retreat dealt with reviewing the present vision statement, mission statement and core beliefs from the Board's Strategic Plan. The consensus of the Board was that the three goals in the Strategic Plan – High Student Performance, High Quality Teaching and Administration and Strong and Supportive Environment for Each School and Every Child – were still pertinent. Additionally, no changes to the vision and mission were suggested. However, Board members asked for a paragraph to be drafted to insert prior to the core values that would clarify the role and responsibilities of the Kentucky Board of Education.

Next, the Board moved into discussing possible priority areas for work in the coming year. The following areas were suggested by various members for the Board's consideration:

- Communication – two-way street; sending and receiving messages
- High schools
  - Student accountability; consequences tied to performance
- Request for Proposals (RFP)
  - Modifications to assessment and accountability
  - Writing portfolio
  - Noncognitive reporting
  - Cognitive reporting

- Alignment (disconnect between high school and higher education)
- School-based assessment tools
- Partnerships
- Leadership
- School health
- Professional development
  - Technology
  - Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
  - What is effective instruction?
- KSB/KSD
- Escalation of health care costs
- Dropouts
- Achievement gap
- Secondary GED program
- Early literacy
  - Elementary
  - Middle school
  - High school

These issues were listed and members were asked to indicate those most critical to deal with over the next year. The results of this exercise will be brought to the June meeting for the Board's consideration.

Next, the Board moved on to discussing some critical issues that will need attention over the next year. The first one dealt with enhancing the quality of services to deaf/hard of hearing students and blind/visually impaired students. Commissioner Wilhoit shared that the state could move immediately to respond to the recommendations of the 18 stakeholder groups by establishing a number of geographically selected early childhood learning opportunities similar to the Jessamine Early Learning Village. Also, he explained that the Board and KDE will need to enhance the capacity of the two schools to serve as statewide resources to students, parents and educators. Suggestions from Board members on this issue included:

- Composing a master plan to see the big picture and working backwards to reflect the short-term
- Sharing the plans for serving deaf/hard of hearing and blind/visually impaired students with the Governor, legislative delegations and legislative leadership
- Furnishing Board members with comparative performance data of students at the two schools with other disabled and non-disabled children
- Sharing with the Board the per student cost of public school disabled students
- Disseminating the AIR Report to the newly appointed Board members

**Thursday, May 13, 2004**

Chair Mountjoy announced that the Board held a group dinner on the previous evening with no business being conducted at that dinner.

***DISCUSSION OF ISSUES FOR THE COMING YEAR (CONTINUED)***

Secretary of Education Virginia Fox brought forward a letter and proposal from Governor Fletcher asking the Board's advice on how to spend \$10 million additional budget dollars. She indicated these dollars would be for one year only and advised it would be best for the Board to work from Technical Amendment 2 when deciding where to allocate these additional dollars.

Chair Mountjoy explained that the Governor requested a decision from the Board by the end of the June meeting. She suggested that Department staff talk with Brad Cowgill, Bob Shimer and Secretary Fox if clarification is needed on the proposal and then come back to the Board at the June meeting with a proposal for consideration. She asked Secretary Fox to convey to the Governor the Board's appreciation of his emphasis on education.

Commissioner Wilhoit then moved on to the next critical issue of assessment and accountability. He noted the following about this area:

- The initial compliance work on *No Child Left Behind* has been completed and approved by the United States Department of Education (USDOE). The Department will continue to adjust Kentucky's state plan as flexibility is provided by the United States Department of Education.
- The Board and Department have been reflecting on the effectiveness of our current assessment and accountability system, with two criteria in mind: a) Do we have a valid and reliable system that can be defended against inquiries and challenges? and b) What is the relationship between assessment/accountability, curriculum/instruction and student results? The second question is where the bulk of the Board's time will be spent in deciding the future direction for our assessment and accountability system.
- The KDE is engaged in a review of the mathematics and language content standards. Meetings have occurred with Secretary Fox and others on the American Diploma Project recommendations and other standards. By the August Board meeting, the Department will have a comparison of benchmark standards with our current content standards. This comparative work will force the conversation with higher education and other entities for alignment purposes and certain standards of performance.
- We will be operating under a timeline that will allow the KBE and Department to structure the new Request for Proposals (RFP).

- The assessment and accountability conversation will include ways to improve the current assessment and accountability system. Some changes will be addressed directly in the RFP and others will be included in an informal system wrapped around the assessment and accountability system.

At this point, Chair Mountjoy indicated that staff needs to know if the Board is comfortable with the current direction and path on assessment and accountability of examining content standards, other enhancements and RFP items. The Board by consensus concurred.

The discussion moved on to the area of reading where the Commissioner explained the following:

- Reading is supported by federal funds, the Early Reading Incentive Grants program and some middle school support.
- During the recent legislative session, consideration of the Read to Achieve program to compliment the federal Reading First program was pursued but did not pass. The Read to Achieve program was designed to assist those students most in need and the Department feels that the Early Reading Incentive Grant (ERIG) program needs to be redesigned around the goals of Read to Achieve. The Board agreed with the intent to revise regulations governing ERIG.
- Agreed with the intent to rewrite the Board regulations governing ERIG.

The discussion moved on to consideration of changes to the Board's policy manual. Chair Mountjoy indicated that approval would not occur at the retreat but instead at the June meeting. She then proceeded to go over the revisions to the language in the policy manual.

Chair Mountjoy then proposed that at the June meeting she appoint a three-member nominating committee that would talk with other members about what traits need to be possessed by the next Board chair and also what Board member could best provide the leadership characteristics that are identified. She suggested that this committee bring a recommendation to the Board at the August meeting if agreement can be reached. Board members concurred with this process by consensus.

Meeting dates were another topic of discussion. Board members were asked by Chair Mountjoy to check the proposed meeting dates provided by staff for 2005 and 2006 on their calendars and indicated that Mary Ann Miller will add to this proposal to come up with proposed extra meeting dates for work sessions over 2005 and 2006. She also asked that extra meeting days for September and November of 2004 be proposed and noted that the meeting dates would come back in June for approval by the Board.

As to going outside of Frankfort for meetings in the future, Chair Mountjoy noted that in October the Board would be visiting schools in Frankfort Independent and Franklin County. It was decided by consensus that instead of doing meetings out of town that the Commissioner would do school visits in each Board member's area to get Board members into the schools.

Chair Mountjoy noted that David Webb had requested to attend the co-op meeting in his area and said that permission to do so had been granted.

***ADJOURNMENT***

The retreat adjourned at 12:15 p.m.